The Marvel Magazine of Fantasy & Science-Fiction / December 1983 / $2.50 £1 U.K. - $3.00 CAN.

02620

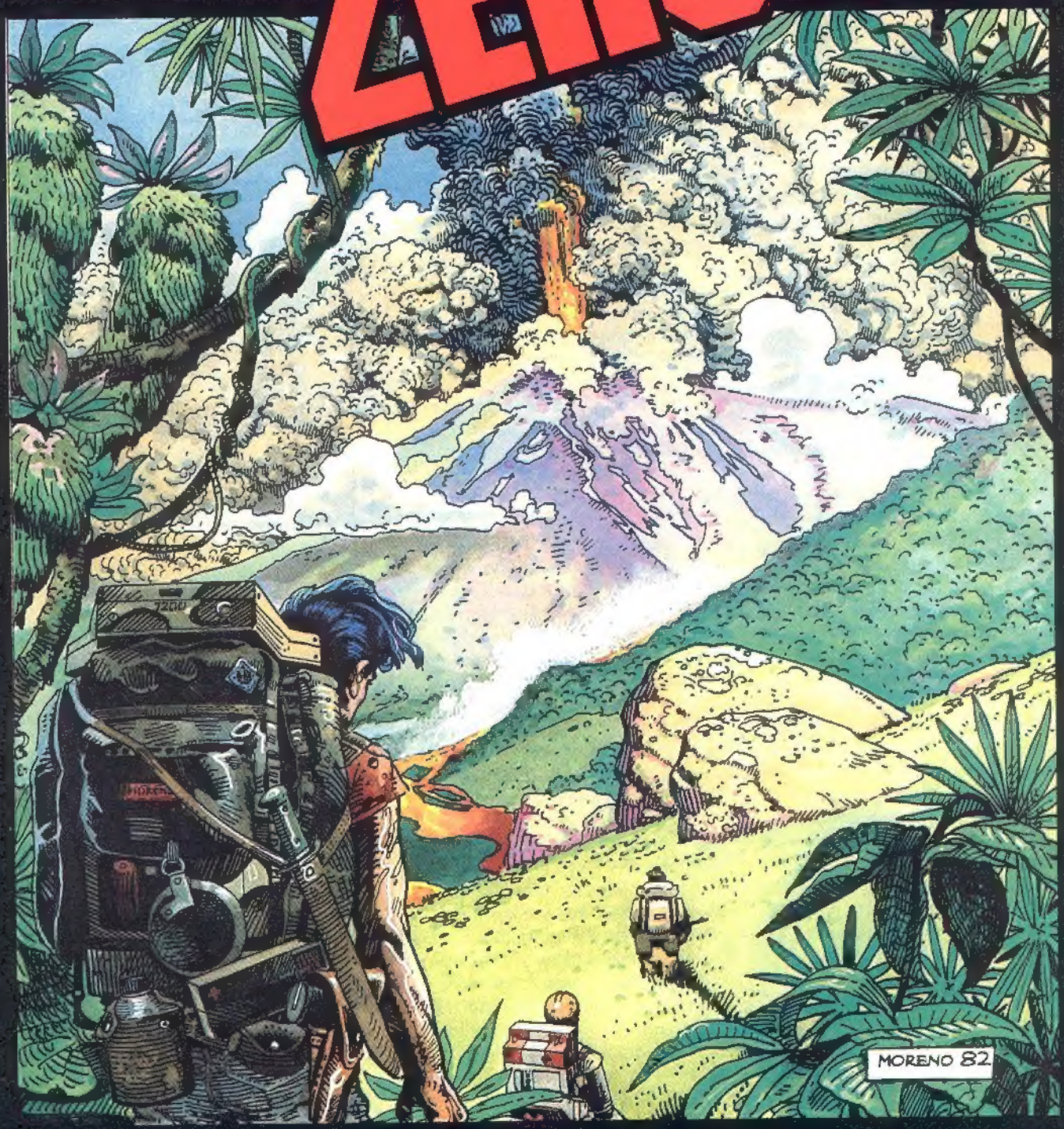
# epic ILLUSTRATED™

this issue:
SUNSTROKE
by Michael W. Kaluta

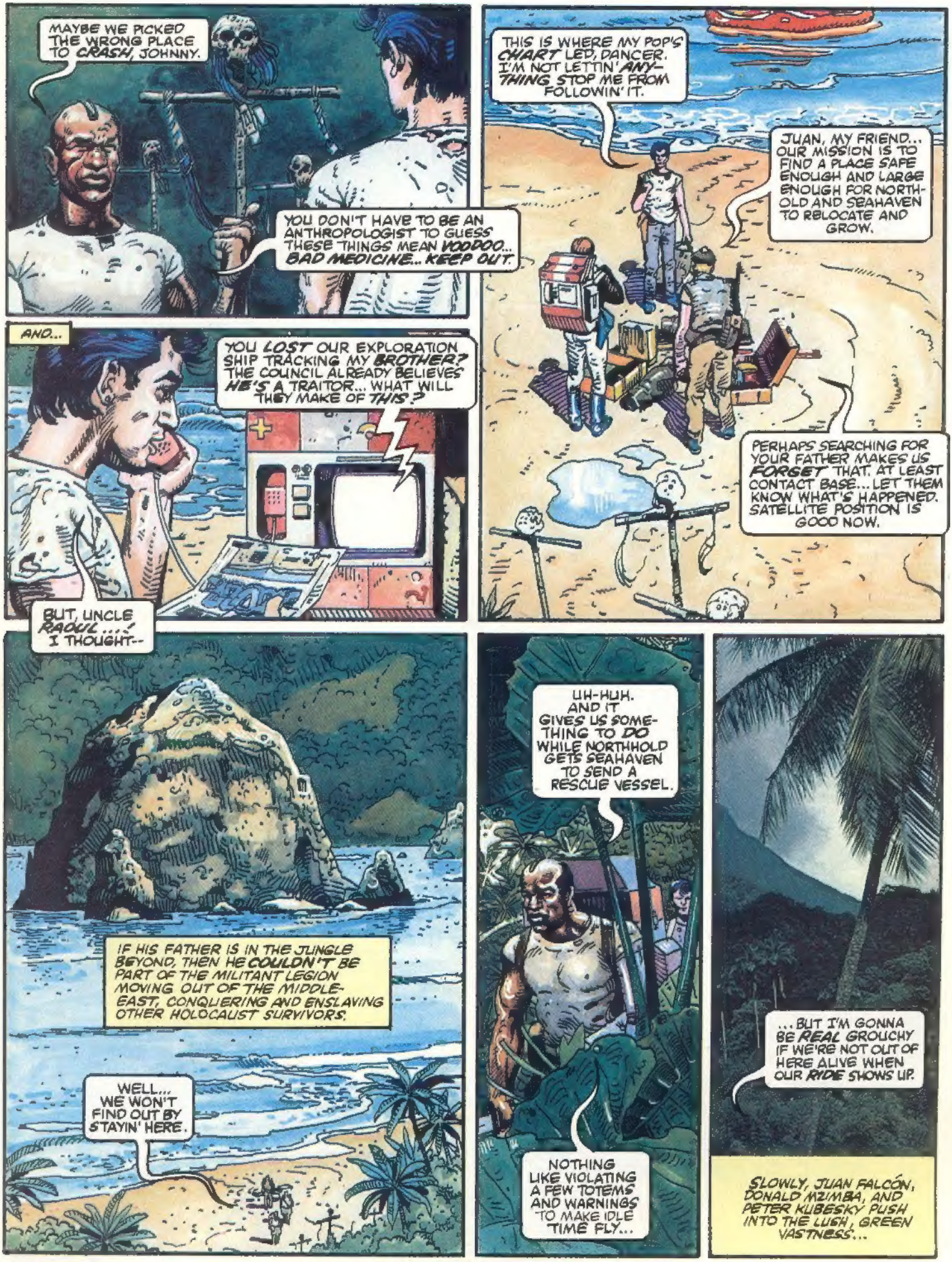
plus:
SACRED & THE PROFANE
and
GENERATION ZERO

12
0 71486 02620 0

# GENERATION ZERO




## JUNGLE TRAIL


MAYBE WE PICKED THE WRONG PLACE TO CRASH, JOHNNY.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AN ANTHROPOLOGIST TO GUESS THESE THINGS MEAN VOODOO... BAD MEDICINE... KEEP OUT.
THIS IS WHERE MY POP'S CHART LED, DANCER. I'M NOT LETTIN' ANYTHING STOP ME FROM FOLLOWIN' IT.
JUAN, MY FRIEND... OUR MISSION IS TO FIND A PLACE SAFE ENOUGH AND LARGE ENOUGH FOR NORTHOLD AND SEAHAVEN TO RELOCATE AND GROW.
PERHAPS SEARCHING FOR YOUR FATHER MAKES US FORGET THAT. AT LEAST CONTACT BASE... LET THEM KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENED. SATELLITE POSITION IS GOOD NOW.
AND...
YOU LOST OUR EXPLORATION SHIP TRACKING MY BROTHER? THE COUNCIL ALREADY BELIEVES HE'S A TRAITOR... WHAT WILL THEY MAKE OF THIS?
BUT, UNCLE RAOUL...! I THOUGHT--
IF HIS FATHER IS IN THE JUNGLE BEYOND, THEN HE COULDN'T BE PART OF THE MILITANT LEGION MOVING OUT OF THE MIDDLE-EAST, CONQUERING AND ENSLAVING OTHER HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS.
WELL... WE WON'T FIND OUT BY STAYIN' HERE.
UH-HUH. AND IT GIVES US SOMETHING TO DO WHILE NORTHHOLD GETS SEAHAVEN TO SEND A RESCUE VESSEL.
NOTHING LIKE VIOLATING A FEW TOTEMS AND WARNINGS TO MAKE IDLE TIME FLY...
...BUT I'M GONNA BE REAL GROUCHY IF WE'RE NOT OUT OF HERE ALIVE WHEN OUR RIDE SHOWS UP.
SLOWLY, JUAN FALCÓN, DONALD MZIMBA, AND PETER KUBESKY PUSH INTO THE LUSH, GREEN VASTNESS...

© 1983 Pepe Moreno

... UNEASE GROWING WITH EACH STEP THEY TAKE.
YOUR CONCERN IS MAKING ME NERVOUS, DANCER. I THOUGHT AFTER BEING TRAPPED IN THE MINE CAVE-IN WHICH COST YOU YOUR ARM, YOU LIKED BEING CLOSE TO GREEN AND GROWING THINGS.
I DO, KUBE!
WHAT I DON'T LIKE IS WHAT ALL THESE GOOD GREEN AND GROWING THINGS...
...MIGHT BE HIDING.
DEMONICO!
DIAVLÉ!
OH, HELL!
THOK!
RUN FOR IT!
TRULY UNNECESSARY ADVICE, AMIGO...
...AND I INTEND TO KEEP RUNNIN' UNTIL--WHAT? IT CAN'T BE! IN THE MIDDLE OF THE JUNGLE...

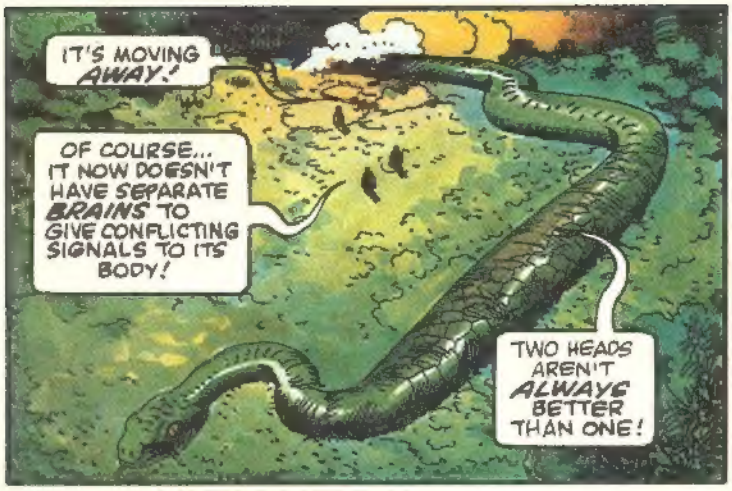
...THEY SEEM TO BE CALLING US DEVILS OR DEMONS. LET'S SEE HOW THEY LIKE FACING ONE!
AT THE SIGHT OF JUAN'S PISTOL, THE PURSUERS STOP.

THEY PROBABLY HAD BAD EXPERIENCES WITH GUNS. BEFORE, JOHNNY... COULD BE WHAT MAKES 'EM SO UNFRIENDLY.
THEIR DIALECT HAS ELEMENTS OF SPANISH IN IT, DANCER. I'M GONNA TRY TALKIN' 'EM AWAY.

DIAVLÉ! DEMONICO! THEY REMAIN STILL. THEY DO NOT THROW THEIR SPEARS BUT THEY DO CHANT SOFTLY, YET DETERMINEDLY, OVER AND OVER, UNTIL...

F-DOW!
ENOUGH OF THIS!
HEY...! DANCER! KUBE! IT WORKED!
GUESS I THREW A PRETTY GOOD SCARE INTO THEM! NOW LET'S FIND A WAY AROUND THIS WALL AND--
FFSSS
UH... JUAN?
FFSSS
FFSSS
...I THINK YOUR SWIFTLY DEPARTING FRIENDS WERE SACRIFICING US TO THE WALL!
OH, SHIT!
TWO HEADS... ONE BODY! A NIGHTMARE! A MUTATED NIGHTMARE!

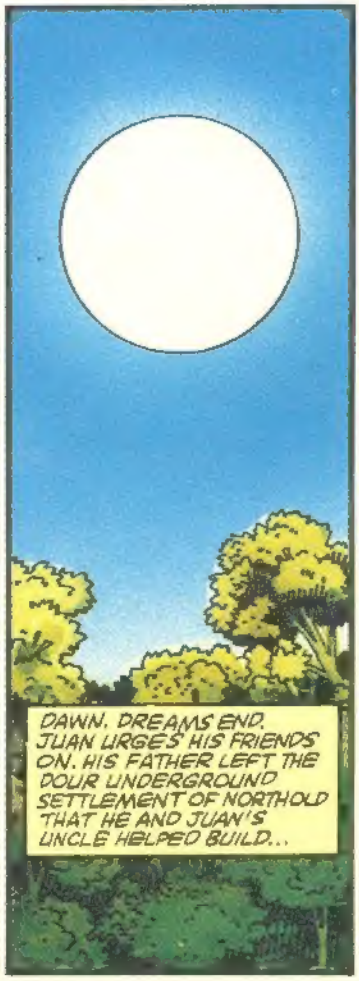
FFSSS
DOUBLE SHIT! CAN'T RUN FAR ENOUGH FAST ENOUGH! GOTTA DO SOMETHIN'... ANYTHING...
... EVEN IF IT'S THE WRONG THING!
GROMP!
WUMP!
IT ISN'T. IN FACT...

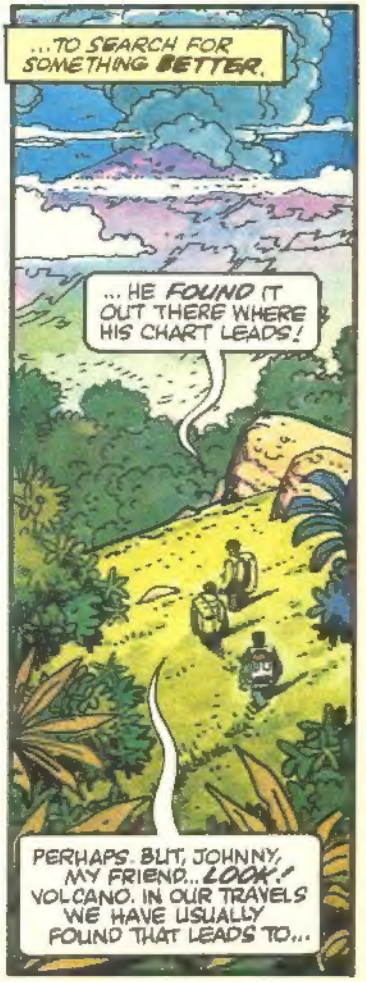

IT'S MOVING AWAY!
OF COURSE... IT NOW DOESN'T HAVE SEPARATE BRAINS TO GIVE CONFLICTING SIGNALS TO ITS BODY!
TWO HEADS AREN'T ALWAYS BETTER THAN ONE!

NIGHT. EXHAUSTED, THEY REST. ON WATCH, DONALD MZIMBA FINDS HIS THOUGHTS TROUBLED BY HIS FRIEND JUAN... AND THE PHANTOM JUAN INSISTS ON PURSUING, VICTOR FALCÓN, ADVENTURER, EXPLORER... AND PERHAPS BETRAYER OF THOSE WHO HOPED FOR A BETTER WORLD RISING FROM THE ONE SO NEARLY DESTROYED.
AND WHILE DANCER THINKS, JUAN FALCÓN DREAMS...

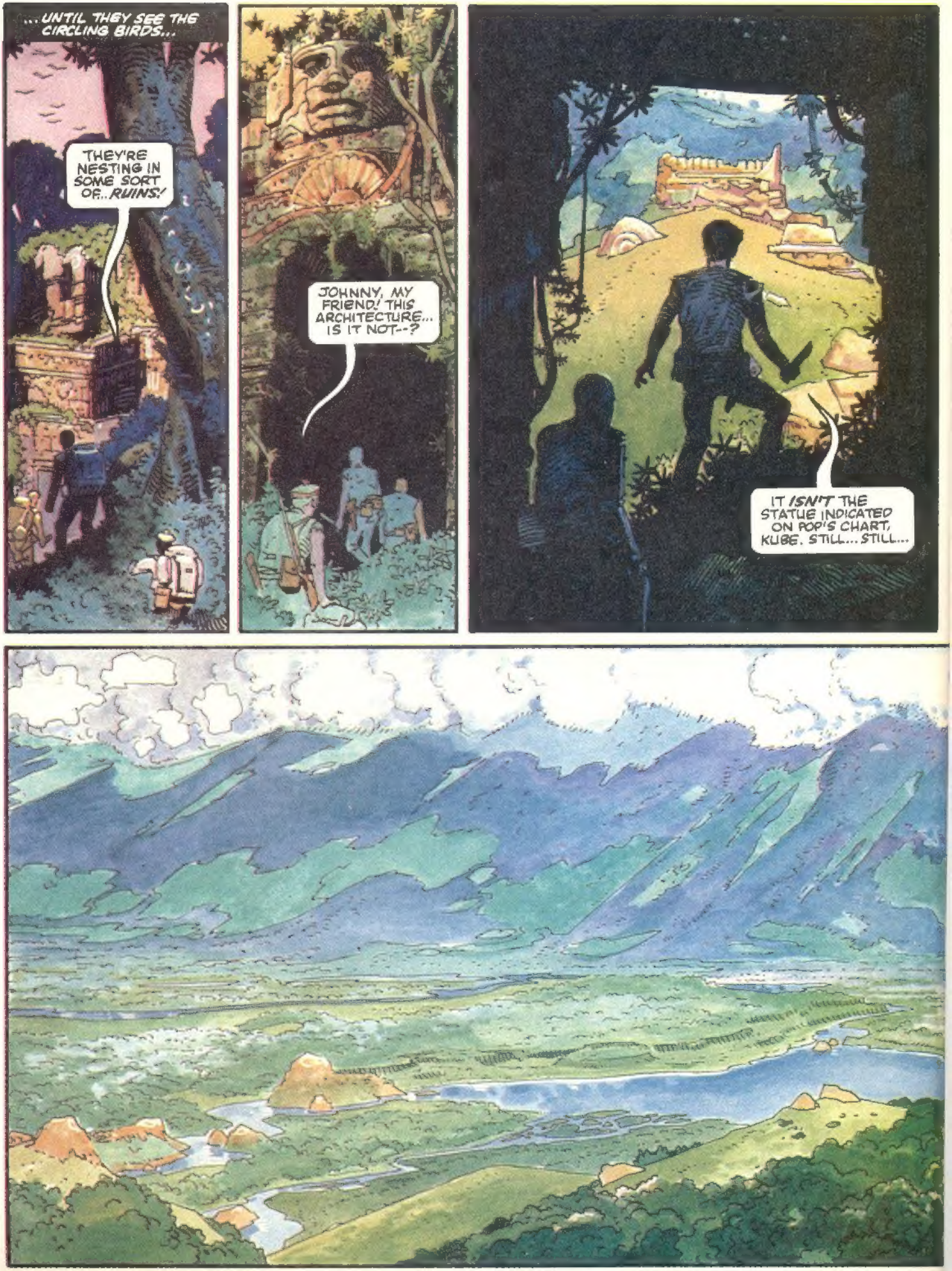
BUT THEY'RE PROOF WE'RE ON THE RIGHT TRACK. THAT MONSTER WAS INDICATED ON POP'S CHART AND-- DAMN!
SPEAR CAUGHT THE COM-SET, DANCER... IT'S MAD IT.

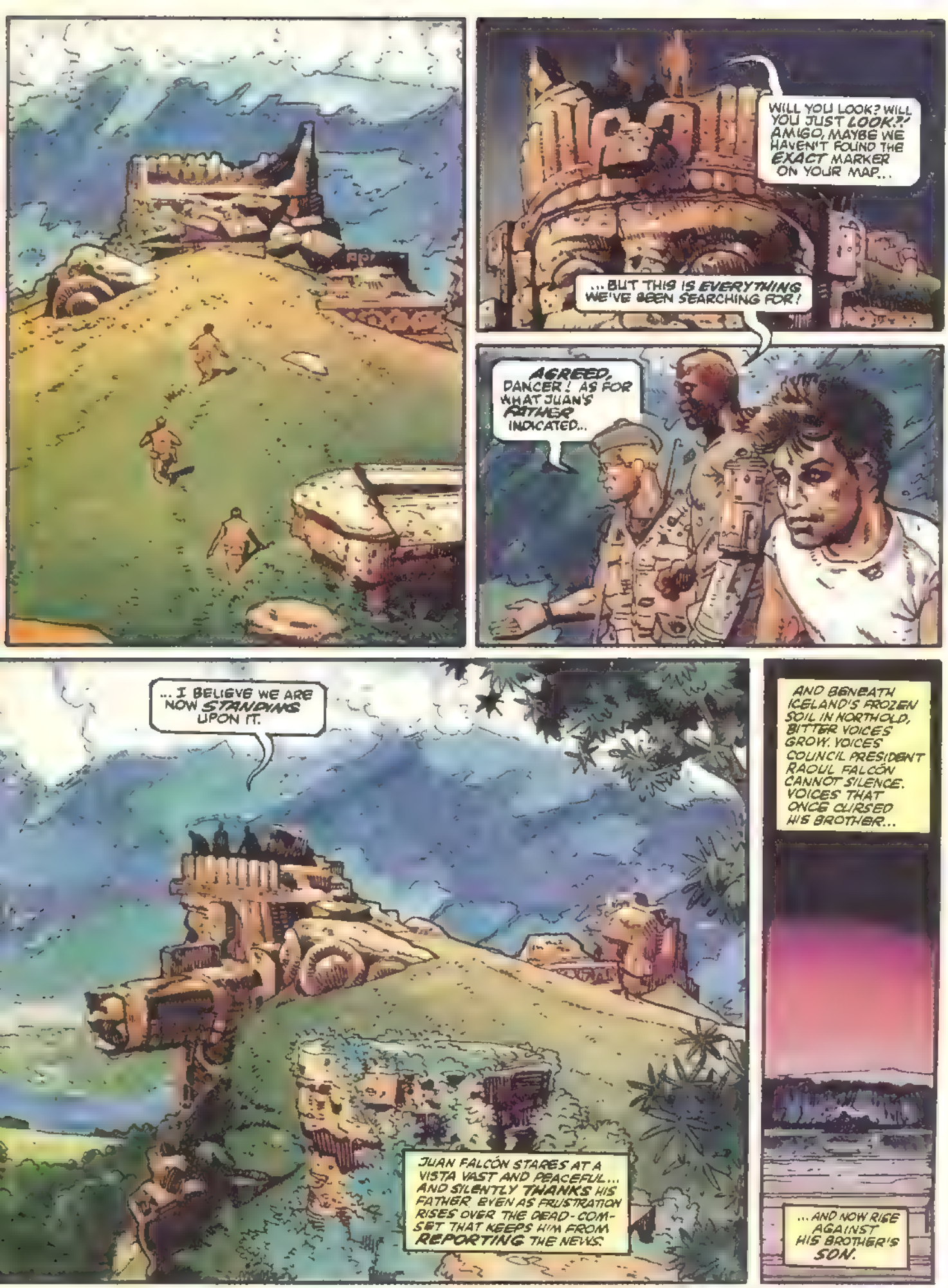
... DREAMS OF LIANA, THE WOMAN HE LOVES, AND OF SEAHAVEN, THE ALL-BUT-PERFECT ISLAND WHERE HE MET HER...
... PERFECT, BUT DOOMED BY ITS LACK OF SPACE.


DAWN. DREAMS END. JUAN URGES HIS FRIENDS ON. HIS FATHER LEFT THE DOUR UNDERGROUND SETTLEMENT OF NORTHOLD THAT HE AND JUAN'S UNCLE HELPED BUILD...


...TO SEARCH FOR SOMETHING BETTER.
... HE FOUND IT OUT THERE WHERE HIS CHART LEADS!
PERHAPS. BUT, JOHNNY, MY FRIEND... LOOK! VOLCANO. IN OUR TRAVELS WE HAVE USUALLY FOUND THAT LEADS TO...

... DEVASTATION. A LAND WASTED, UNSTABLE, AND UNSAFE TO EVEN SETTLE NEAR.
FROM IT FLOW RIVERS OF FIRE AND LAVA, VIOLENTLY, ENDLESSLY.
JOHNNY, OUR SUPPLIES ARE DWINDLING I THINK--
DANCER, A FEW MORE DAYS...
... BRINGS THEM TO ANOTHER RIVER.
THIS ONE RUNS BROAD, GREEN, AND NATURAL...
... BUT NO LESS WILD. IT CHURNS PAST FORESTS AND SWAMPS, IMPENETRABLE AND HOSTILE.
WE'RE ALL CRAZY, JOHNNY! YOU FOR GOIN' ON AND KUBE AN' ME FOR FOLLOWIN'!
ONE MORE BEND, DANCER...TWO! JUST A LITTLE FURTHER...
FIVE TREACHEROUS BENDS LATER THE RAFT IT HAS TAKEN A WEEK TO CONSTRUCT BREAKS UP. HALF- DROWNED, THEY BEGIN TO FIGHT...


...UNTIL THEY SEE THE CIRCLING BIRDS...
THEY'RE NESTING IN SOME SORT OF...RUINS!
JOHNNY, MY FRIEND! THIS ARCHITECTURE... IS IT NOT--?
IT ISN'T THE STATUE INDICATED ON POP'S CHART, KUBE. STILL... STILL...

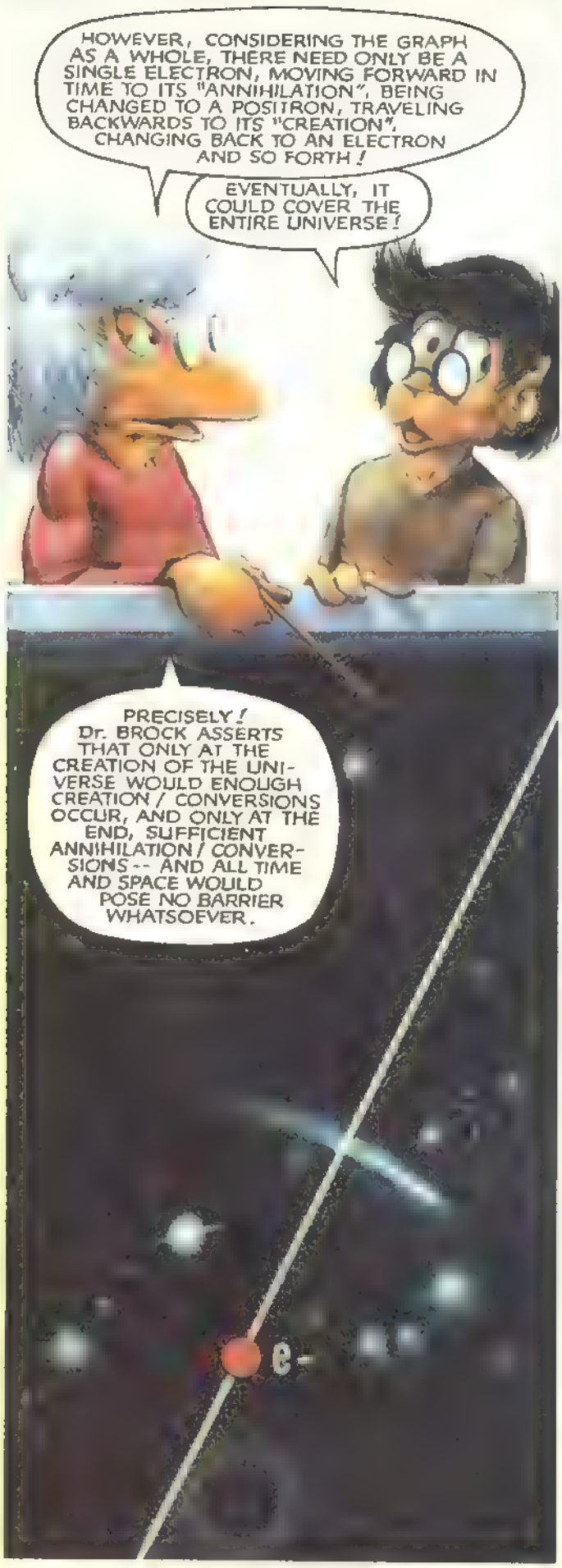

WILL YOU LOOK? WILL YOU JUST LOOK?! AMIGO, MAYBE WE HAVEN'T FOUND THE EXACT MARKER ON YOUR MAP...
...BUT THIS IS EVERYTHING WE'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR!
AGREED, DANCER! AS FOR WHAT JUAN'S FATHER INDICATED...
...I BELIEVE WE ARE NOW STANDING UPON IT.
JUAN FALCÓN STARES AT A VISTA VAST AND PEACEFUL... AND SILENTLY THANKS HIS FATHER EVEN AS FRUSTRATION RISES OVER THE DEAD-COM-SET THAT KEEPS HIM FROM REPORTING THE NEWS.
AND BENEATH ICELAND'S FROZEN SOIL IN NORTHOLD, BITTER VOICES GROW. VOICES COUNCIL PRESIDENT RAOUL FALCÓN CANNOT SILENCE. VOICES THAT ONCE CURSED HIS BROTHER...
...AND NOW RISE AGAINST HIS BROTHER'S SON.

GENERATION ZERO CONTINUES NEXT ISSUE.

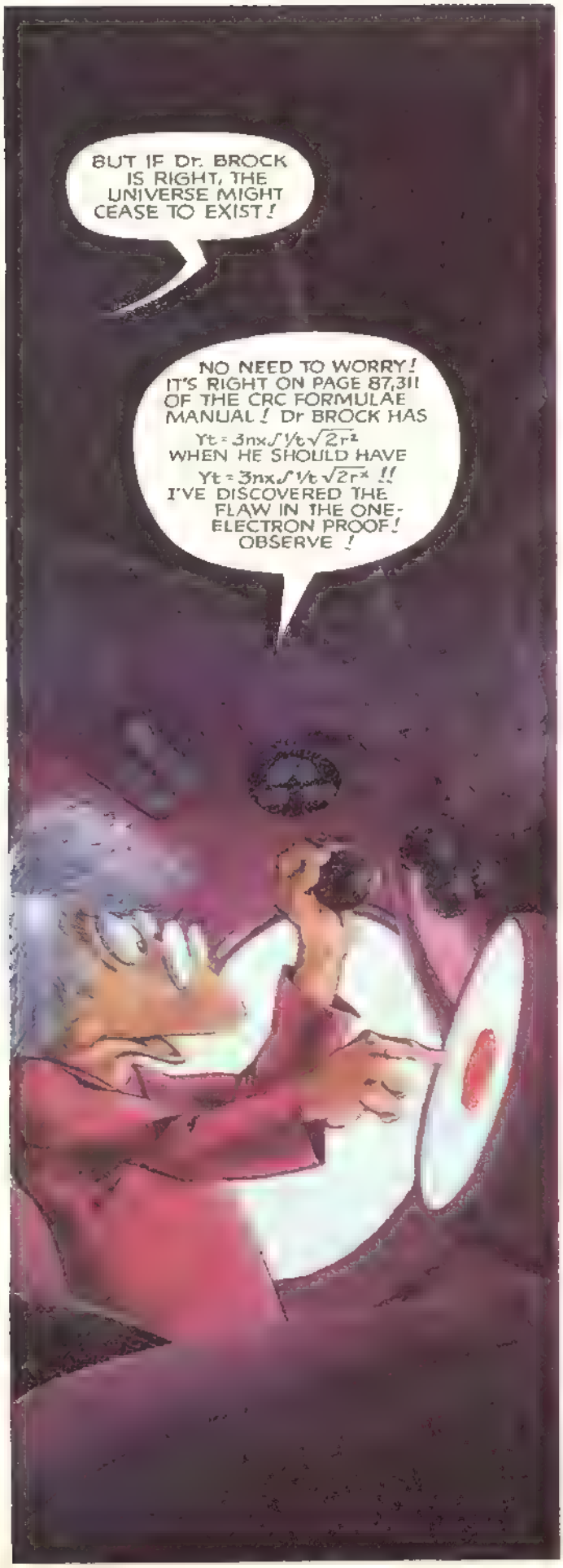
Dr. WaTchSTOP
IN
"THE SINGLE ELECTRON PROOF"
YOU ARE, OF COURSE, ACQUAINTED WITH THE NAME OF Dr. MARTIN BROCK?
CERTAINLY, PROFESSOR! HIS ELEGANT PROOF THAT ANTI MATTER IS MERELY "NORMAL" MATTER MOVING BACKWARDS IN TIME RANKS WITH THE HAWKING UNIFIED FIELD THEORY AS A MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT IN PHYSICS!
$t_3$ ANNIHILATION
$t_2$
$t_1$
e-
e+
e-
e-
0
THEN YOU MUST REMEMBER HIS EQUALLY FAMOUS COROLLARY, THE SO-CALLED "ONE ELECTRON PROOF"?
NATURALLY!
LET US REVIEW IT WITH THE AID OF THIS SIMPLE GRAPH. THE VERTICAL AXIS REPRESENTS TIME, THE HORIZONTAL, SPACE. AS YOU SEE, DURING THIS INSTANT OF TIME ($t_1$), WE OBSERVE A SINGLE ELECTRON, AND THE CREATION OF AN ELECTRON (e-)/ POSITRON (e+) PAIR. REACHING INSTANT 2, WE FIND TWO e-, AND A SINGLE e+... AND AT INSTANT 3, ONE OF THE ELECTRONS CONTINUES OFF INTO SPACE, WHILST THE OTHER IS "DESTROYED" IN A COLLISION WITH THE POSITRON.

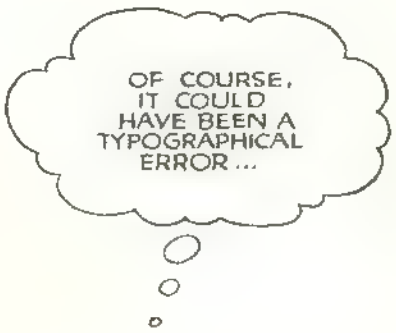


story © 1983 Toren Smithartwork © 1983 Ken Macklin


HOWEVER, CONSIDERING THE GRAPH AS A WHOLE, THERE NEED ONLY BE A SINGLE ELECTRON, MOVING FORWARD IN TIME TO ITS "ANNIHILATION", BEING CHANGED TO A POSITRON, TRAVELING BACKWARDS TO ITS "CREATION", CHANGING BACK TO AN ELECTRON AND SO FORTH!
EVENTUALLY, IT COULD COVER THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE!
PRECISELY! Dr. BROCK ASSERTS THAT ONLY AT THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE WOULD ENOUGH CREATION / CONVERSIONS OCCUR, AND ONLY AT THE END, SUFFICIENT ANNIHILATION / CONVERSIONS -- AND ALL TIME AND SPACE WOULD POSE NO BARRIER WHATSOEVER.
e-

THEN CONCEIVABLY, A SINGLE ELECTRON COULD BIND TOGETHER ALL MATTER IN THE UNIVERSE!
QUITE SO! HOWEVER, WHILE SCRUTINIZING Dr. BROCK'S EQUATIONS, I UNCOVERED AN ERROR! AT LAST, WITH THE AID OF THIS MACHINE, I SHALL DISPROVE HIS ERRONEOUS CONCLUSIONS. ITS FUNCTION IS TO UTTERLY DESTROY AN ELECTRON WITHOUT CHANGING IT TO A POSITRON!


BUT IF Dr. BROCK IS RIGHT, THE UNIVERSE MIGHT CEASE TO EXIST!
NO NEED TO WORRY! IT'S RIGHT ON PAGE 87,311 OF THE CRC FORMULAE MANUAL! Dr BROCK HAS
$Yt = 3nx\int 1/t\sqrt{2r^2}$
WHEN HE SHOULD HAVE
$Yt = 3nx\int 1/t\sqrt{2r^4}$ !!
I'VE DISCOVERED THE FLAW IN THE ONE-ELECTRON PROOF! OBSERVE !


OF COURSE, IT COULD HAVE BEEN A TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR...

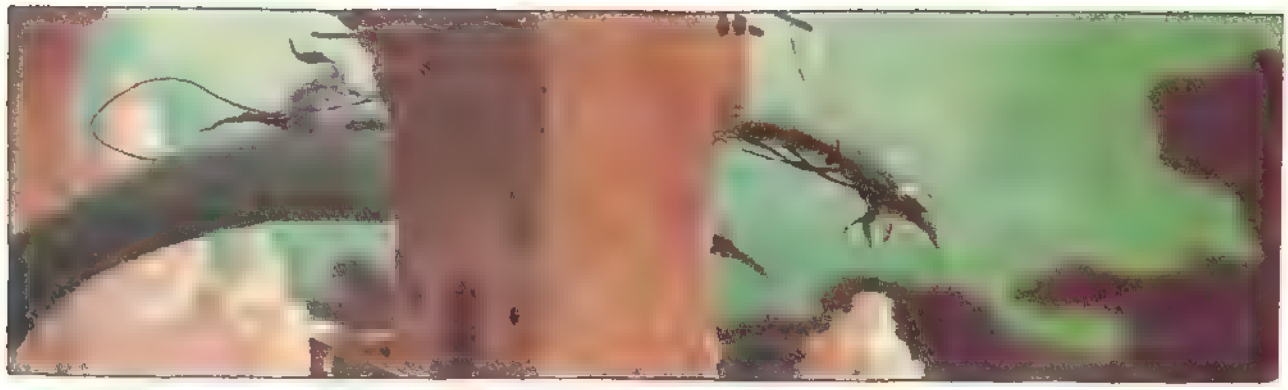
THEY WERE SURVIVORS...

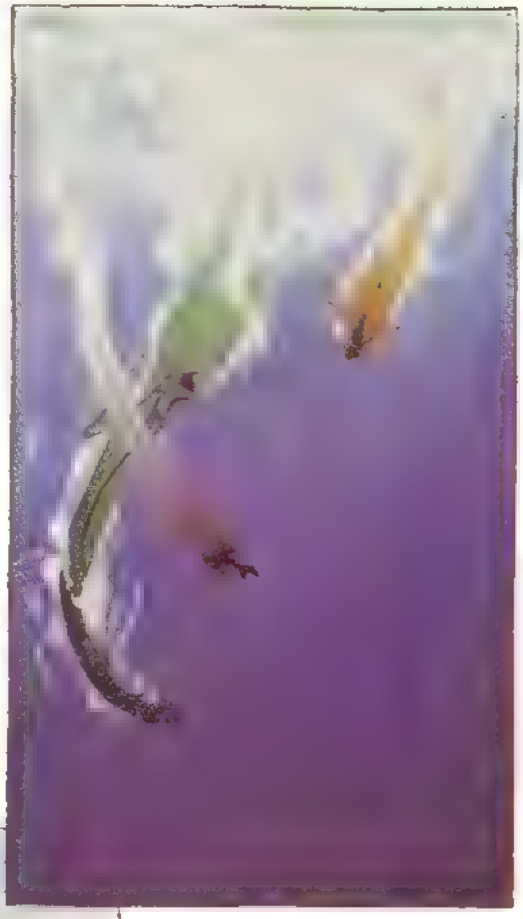
IN VAST FORESTS THAT COVERED THE EARTH... ONLY THE **DRAGON** RULED!

story © 1983 Charles Vess

IN SILENT GREEN JUNGLES ONLY THEIR TRUMPETING CALLS COULD BE HEARD.
AGE OF THE
DRAGON
BUT OUT PAST THE FOREST'S EDGE WHERE THE DECAYING RUINS OF MAN LAY...

THERE WAS ANOTHER SURVIVOR!





IT WAS A WORLD FOR SURVIVORS AND THIS WAS THE AGE OF THE DRAGON! C.V.

JAMES FOX'S
RECRUITER
WITH B.K.TAYLOR
SO CINDY TURNED OUT TO BE A HOT DATE! 'EH, FRANK?
THAT'S AMAZING! I'VE SEEN HER AROUND THE OFFICE, AND SHE NEVER SEEMED THAT OPEN.
BUT, YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY NOT ME, CARL BABY. A LITTLE OF MY CHARM, A FEW PATENTED MOVES TO THE RIGHT PLACES, AND SHE WAS BEGGING TO SPEND THE NIGHT WITH ME... HOW COULD I LET HER DOWN?

© 1983 James Fox

WELL, WHAT HAVE WE HERE? SOMETHING NEW!
YAH, I HAVEN'T SEEN THIS AROUND.
ME NEITHER, BUT I'D LIKE TO!

GOING OUR WAY?
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE ALL GOING UP!
THIS IS UNUSUAL FOR ME. I'M USED TO GOING DOWN IN ELEVATORS.
BOY, THIS IS THE CLOSEST I'VE BEEN TO A CANDY STORE SINCE I WAS A KID.
I WAS THINKING MORE LIKE A PLAYGROUND.
22 23 24 25 26
THIS IS WHERE WE GET OFF.
I ALREADY GOT OFF!
SEE YOU GUYS LATER. I'M RIDING THIS ELEVATOR TO HEAVEN.

NEVER MIND THEM.
THEY ACT LIKE THEY'VE NEVER BEEN AROUND A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN BEFORE.
IF YOU'RE NEW IN THE AREA, I CAN SHOW YOU SOME GREAT PLACES TO EAT.
IN FACT, THE HOTEL NEXTDOOR IS PERFECT FOR A LITTLE AFTERNOON DELIGHT.
EMERGENCY STOP

WHAT THE...
YOU LOATHSOME LOW-LIFE, SON-OF-A-BITCH!

JUST AS I THOUGHT, ALL TALK.
I WAS HOPING FOR A WARRIOR, BUT YOU'RE NOT EVEN MAN ENOUGH FOR THE ARENA!

YOU BALL-LESS, GUTLESS PEON! YOU WILL BE FODDER FOR OUR SALT MINES.

TO YOUR DESTINY, FOOL!

20-4
SO YOU JUST TOLD NANCY TO GET LOST?
YAH, IT GOT OLD FAST. A GUY LIKE ME NEEDS NEW TERRITORIES TO CONQUER, OR I GET BORED.

# THE SACRED & THE PROFANE

THE ONCE BENIGN SILENCE OF SPACE SEEMS MALEVOLENT NOW ITS VERY FIBRE RENT BY WHATEVER FORCE HAS SHAKEN THIS VESSEL TO ITS DEPTHS. CAN WE HAVE TRAVELLED SO FAR ONLY TO MEET OUR OWN QUIETUS?

§ I AM MUCH TOO FRIGHTENED TO THINK MYSELF INSOLENT. OR HERETICAL. IF WE HAVE SUFFERED THE ATTACK OF SOME UNSEEN NEMISIS. THEN THE HAND OF GOD HAS LAID THE WAY. CALLING ALL OF OUR TEMPTATIONS. TRIBULATIONS. AND ANXIETIES TO TASK. THIS MUST BE HIS TEST FOR US. CAN OUR FEARS POSSIBLY BE TURNED TO OUR ADVANTAGE?

§ PERHAPS THE DANGER IS EVEN GREATER THAN THE MORTAL PERIL WE NOW FACE. PERHAPS OUR VERY SOULS ARE THREATENED. YET ALL APPREHENSION RETREATS TO THE FEARFUL STILLNESS

§ FOR THE BRIEFEST MOMENT THE VIOLENCE MADE ME THINK OF NOTHING SO MUCH AS MY FORMER STATION AT THE MISSION OF SAINT PETER IS SAMOA SIX YEARS AGO WHAT A TERRIBLE TIME THAT SEEMED THE EARTHQUAKES SHOOK THE COUNTRY. I REMEMBER THE TENUOUS HOLD THE PEOPLE HAD UPON THEIR PROPERTY. THEIR POSSESIONS . . . EVEN THEIR LIVES. THE FEAR WHICH APPEARED SO REAL TO ME SEEMS ALMOST A POCRYPHAL WHEN COMPARED TO THE HAZARD WE NOW CONFRONT

§ I PRAY THAT WE FACE THIS MENACE IN THE DEVOUT FASHION OF HISTORIC CHRISTENDOM. THAT. FOLLOWING JOSHUA UPON HIS HEAVENLY STEED. THUNDERING THROUGH THESE DIABOLIC MYSTERIES LEAVING THEM PROSTRATE AND DULL. WILL BE ENOUGH.

S. Marianna

By Dean Motter and Ken Steacy

A STAR + REACH PRODUCTION

c MCMLXXXII

DISPOSITIO
CHAPTER 1

# *Pattern of Wounds*

THIS IS NO HOLY WAR, YOU [illegible]. YOU HAD BETTER PRAY THAT THE LIFE WITHIN THAT THING CAN NOT BE TALLATE!
THAT ABOMINATION IS THE WORK OF SATAN, AND IN THE NAME OF ALL THAT IS HOLY I [illegible] IT!

JOSHUA! COME TO YOUR SENSES MAN!
ARCH BISHOP I THINK YOU'D BETTER HAVE A LOOK AT THIS
IT LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF SWARM COMING OUT –
MY GOD IN HEAVEN!
JOSHUA ?
JOSHUA!

FORGIVE THE INTRUSION YOUR EMINENCE!
WHAT IS IT, JOSHUA. WHAT IS OUT THERE?
EVIL.
WE ARE UNDER ATTACK BY THE POWERS OF DARKNESS! THIS SACRED VESSEL HAS BEEN VIOLATED! FOR THE SAKE OF ST. CATHERINE'S AND MOTHER CHURCH THE LEGION MUST BE CALLED OUT! WE MUST MEET THE CHALLENGE, NO—
JOSHUA, JOSHUA . . . WE MUST NOT RUSH TO EXTREME ACTIONS. I MUST CONSULT THE ARCH BISHOP —
THERE IS NO TIME! EVEN AS WE SPEAK THESE WRETCHED CREATURES APPROACH. IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS — SANCTION THE STRIKE

I PRAY THAT WE ARE NOT BEING RASH ... SUMMON YOUR MEN JOSHUA THE LORD BE WITH YOU
ASSEMBLE THE LEGION! PREPARE FOR IMMEDIATE EVACUATION! FULL FORCE!
AND THROUGH THE VIRTUE OF THY HOLY NAME DRIVE FAR AWAY FROM THIS VESSEL ALL EVIL INFLUENCE

JOSHUA TO LEGION. FIRE PROXIMITY BLASTS INTO THE SWARMS EPICENTER DEFLECT. THEN DESTROY THE ENEMY QCT
BROTHER PAUL SET A CURSE ON THE DAMAGE AREA I'M GOING IN
BUT BROTHER JOSHUA
MOVE

LEGION IV THE MASS IS SCATTERING BUT THE TEN DRILS ARE CRAWLING ALL OVER THE SHIP' WE'LL HAVE TO SPACEWALK AND ELIMINATE THEM INDIVIDUALLY
LEGION VI SAME SITUATION THERE'S JUST TOO MANY OF THEM
THEY RE SWARMING AGAIN AND HEADING FOR THE SHIP'

RETURN TO ST CATHERINES
SAY NOTHING I WILL DE-
BRIEF YOU LATER
YES BROTHER JOSHUA

NO NO! JESUS CHRIST NO!
WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE HE'S UP TO?
I DON'T KNOW. BUT HE DON'T SEEM QUITE RIGHT SOMEHOW
CAREFUL, BROTHER

# THE CONDORA

BY RAY JADWICK • ART BY JAMES ROMBERGER

ART CONSULTANT L'AMERICAINE

I AM THINKING FOR US OF A VISITING VENETIAN; WITH SEX DRIPPING EYES, CANDIDLY DRAPED SHOULDERS AND RED RED LIPS JUSTIFIED WITH A GAINT KNOWING SMILE.

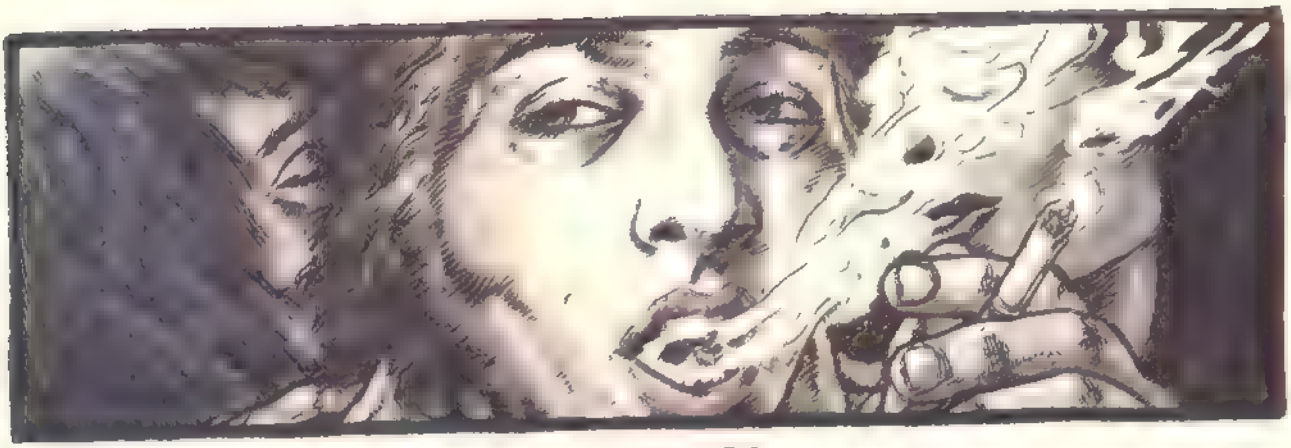
THE CONDORA HAS DELUSIONS OF HUMANITY, AND IT ASKED OF HIM AND HE ANSWERED:



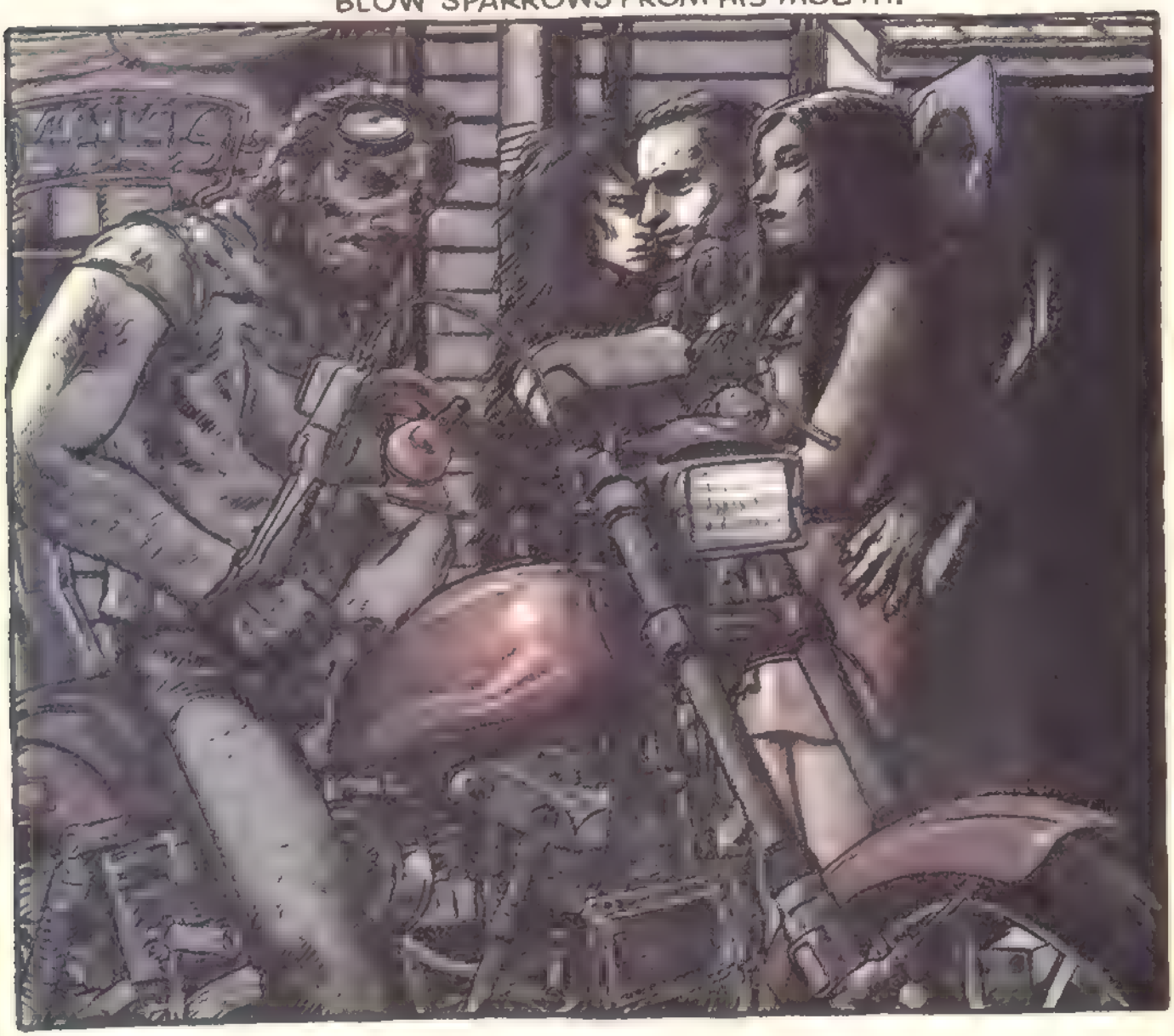
© 1983 Grave Concern

"I'M WAITING FOR
A VOICE TO TALK SO LOUD
THAT THE LAST MEN
BREAK DOWN AND CRY,
WHILE TEN THOUSAND SACRED BIRDS
SING OUT THE INSTRUCTIONS TO FLY.

"I'M WAITING FOR
A VIRGIN TO COME
TO SEDUCE THE SKIES
AND FOR A MOTHER TO KISS HER BABY
AS THE LAST MAN LIFTS AND FLIES."



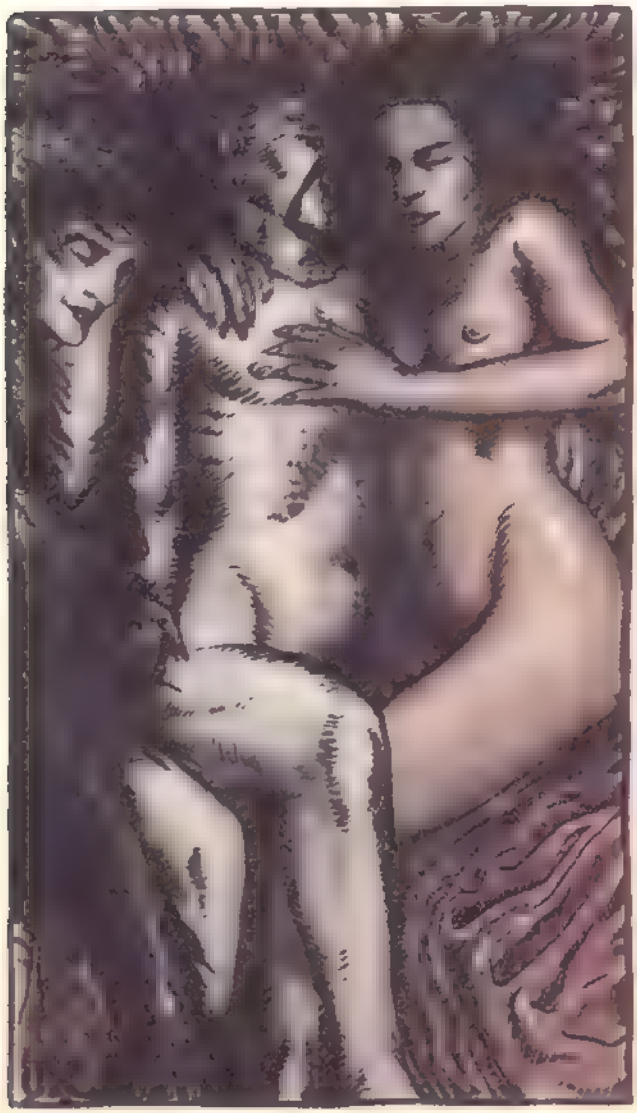
THE CONDORA.
SO DAMNED HUMAN.
BUT HE CAN WHISPER AND WHEN NO ONE'S LOOKING,
BLOW SPARROWS FROM HIS MOUTH.

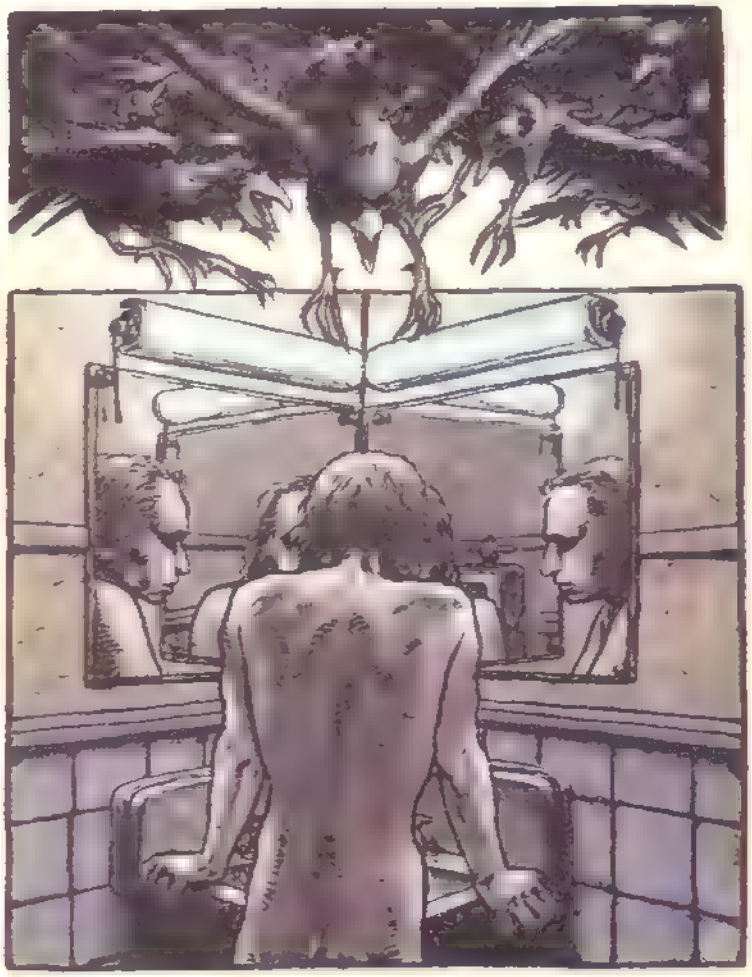


THE CONDORA,
DELUSION ASIDE,
NO SYMPATHY FOR OVERWORKED HEROES,
WHO WONDER WILL THEIR BODIES BREAK
BEFORE THE BONE-SHEDDING STAGE ARRIVES.

THE CONDORA
SO YOUNG AND INEXPERIENCED
WITH THE HUMAN CHEMISTRY SYSTEM
YET WITH SO MUCH TO DO IN SO LITTLE TIME.

NEVER EXPOSED
THOUGH REPOSED
TIME AND TIME AGAIN.





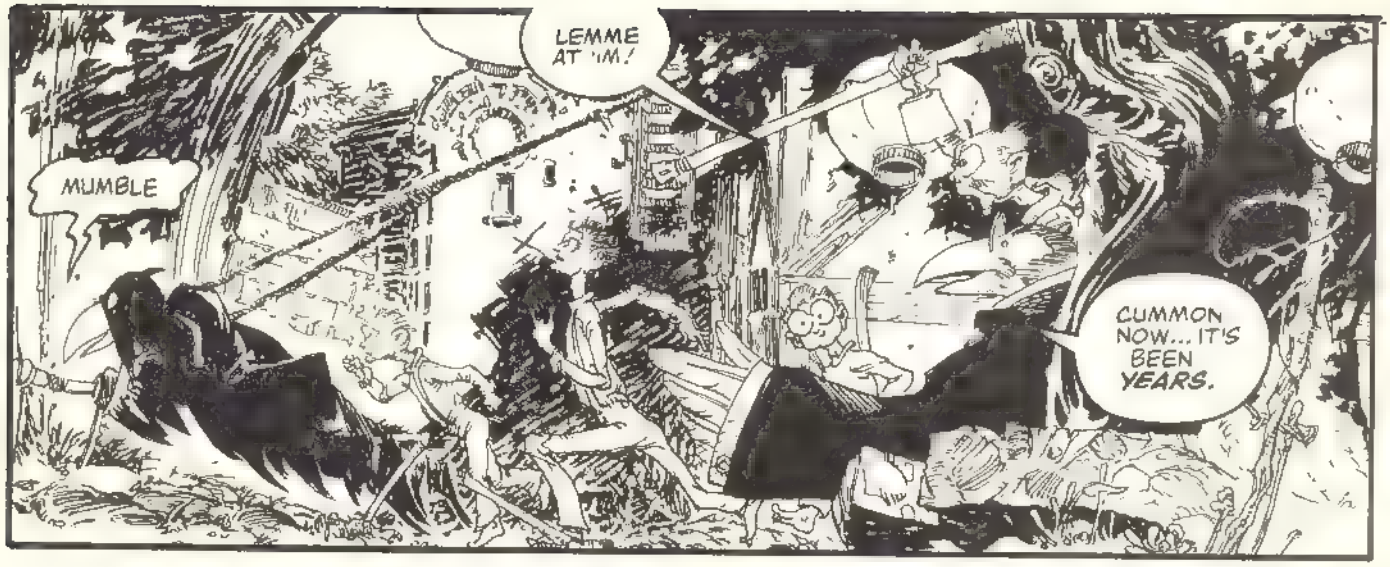
THE CONDORA
THINKING OF HITLER
AS THE FIRST REAL ROCK STAR,
HE WHISPERS SO NOT TO BE HEARD:
"I AM THE CONDORA;
NOW SHOW ME WHY I AM HERE."

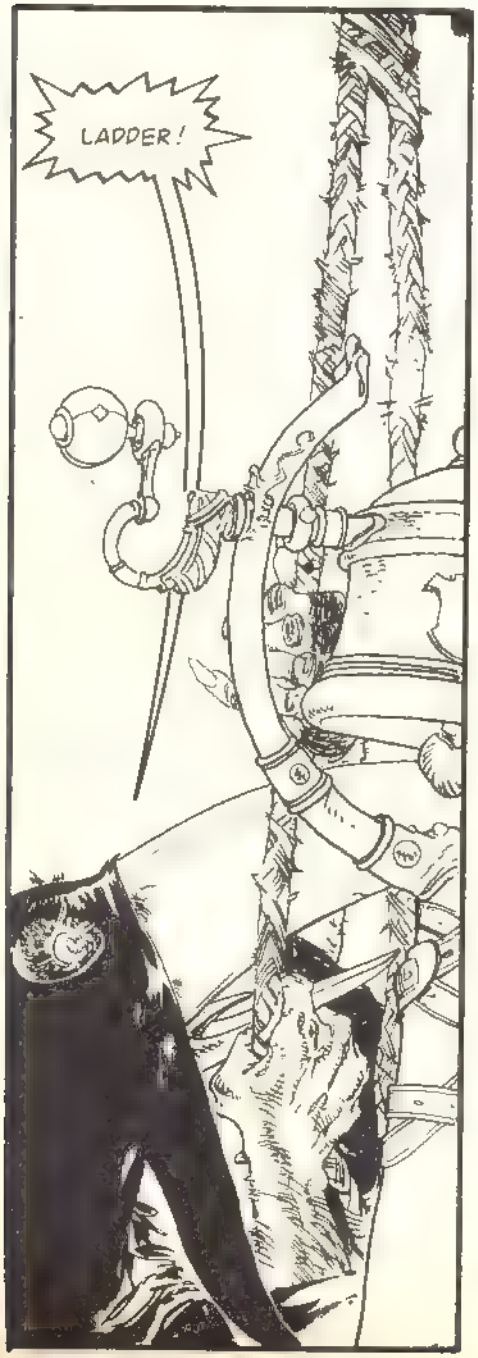
© 1983 Michael Kaluta

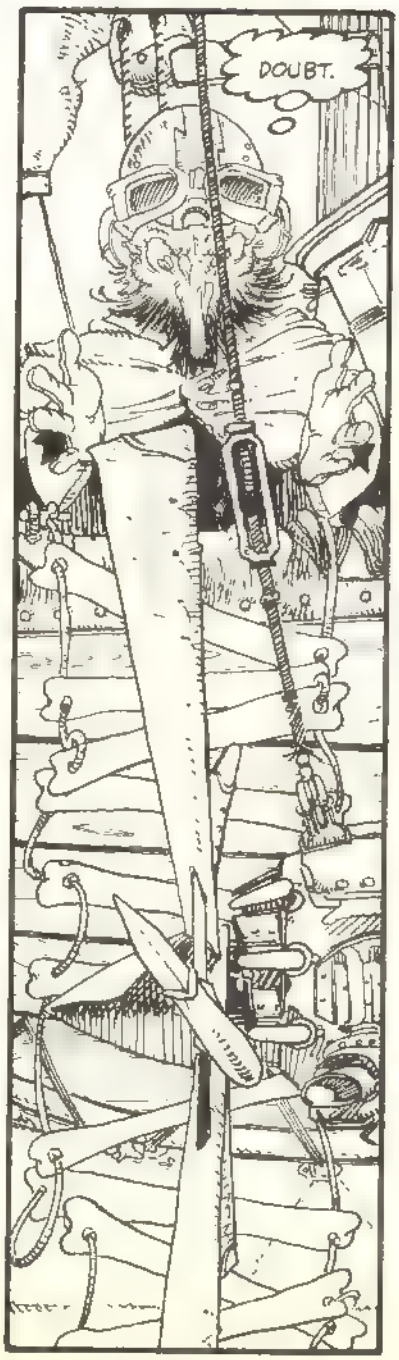
TWO HOURS FROM NOW, I'LL BE A HOUSEHOLD WORD. I'VE WORKED YEARS FOR THIS...
NAME EMBLAZONED 'CROSS THE SKY IN MILE HIGH LETTERS! THE WINNAH!
DING DONG
THIS TIME THEY'LL BE NO DOUBT...
THE WINNAH
WOT A CHEEZECAKE!
AT THAT VERY MOMENT...
DAMN HOT!

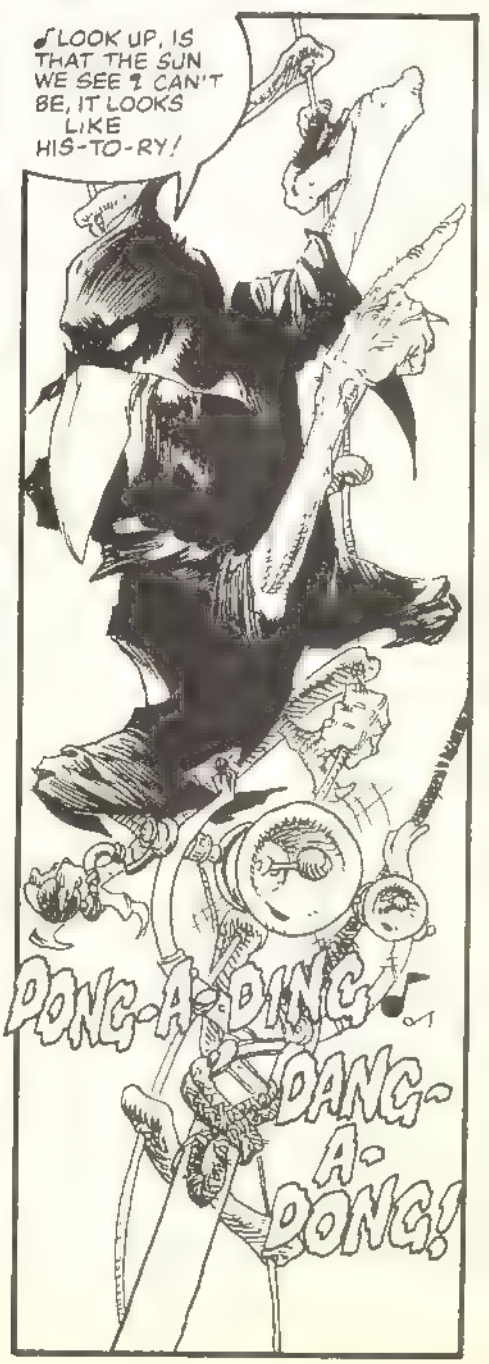
HOT? DID YOU SAY HOT? I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT HOT!
AGAIN.
OKAY-- HOT.
AS WE FLEW HIGHER THE SUN FILLED THE SKY...
I WAS PUFFING CLOSER 'N' HELL TO BEIN' THE FIRST AND WIN WHEN THAT DAMN BIRD EXPLODED...
SETTIN ME ON FIRE.
HOT ENUF FOR YOU?
IF I EVER CATCH THAT CROW...
...YOU'LL SHOW HIM A THING OR THREE--WELL --SEEMS YOU'VE GOT YOUR CHANCE.
ER...

TAA
DAA!


LEMME AT 'IM!
MUMBLE
CUMMON NOW... IT'S BEEN YEARS.


LADDER!

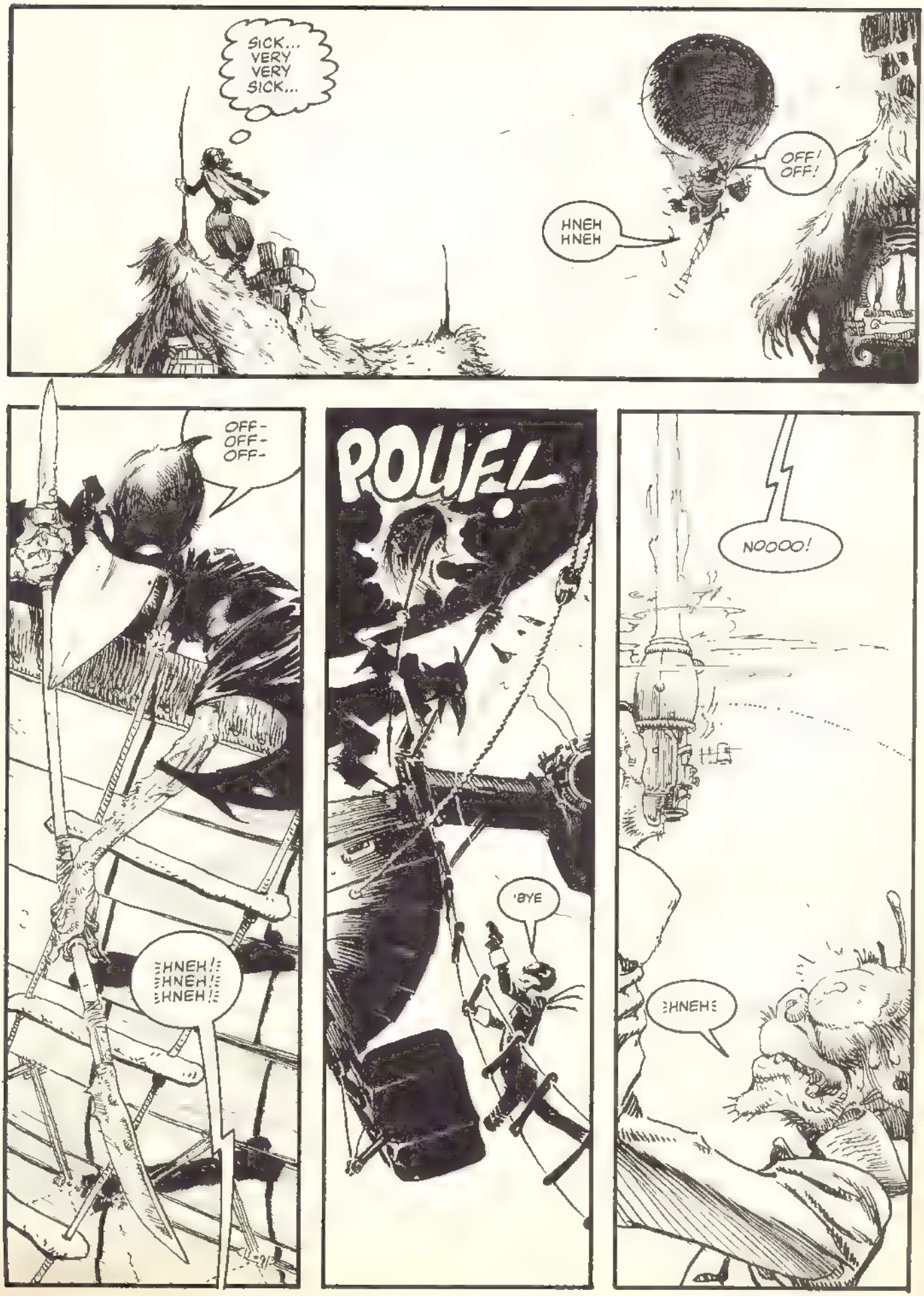

DOUBT.


♪LOOK UP, IS THAT THE SUN WE SEE ? CAN'T BE, IT LOOKS LIKE HIS-TO-RY!
DONG-A-DING, DANG-A-DONG!

YES!
WHAT MAKES A LEGEND MOST? A BRIEF AIRSPAN TO THAT BRITE BALL AND YOU CAN ALL CALL ME A HERO...
THE WINNAH!
WOW!
OH MY GOD
WHAT?
WHAT?!?

EAT YOUR HEART OUT, LOSER. :HNEH:
LOSER? LOSER? YOU LOST!
YOU BLEW UP!
YOU.. YOU--
YOU A DEAD MAN
WHOA! CUMMON, KID. DEEP BREATHS... DEEP BREATHS.
'BYE.
LET'S GO HOME.
G-GITOUTTA IT, BIRD... DAMN YOU... GIT--
AW...
SQUAWK!
...OUTTA IT! :HNEH:

I'M GONE...
I DOUBT IT!
GO! GO! GO!
THROW ME THAT SHARP STICK!
I'VE WAITED YEARS FOR THIS!
NOT ME CHUM--
I'M OUTTA HERE.


SICK... VERY VERY SICK...
HNEH HNEH
OFF! OFF!
OFF- OFF- OFF-
HNEH! HNEH! HNEH!
POUF!
'BYE
NOOOO!
HNEH

SO,
HE TIED A SOCK AROUND EVERY TREE AND WHEN JACK CAME BACK...
...HE COULDN'T FIND THE TREASURE THE END.
BUT MOM...

MAROONED

YE BLACK-HEARTED SWINE! YE'VE BEACHED ME HERE, BUT I'M NOT DEFEATED!
AS LONG AS I'M ALIVE--AS LONG AS I HAVE A HEART THAT BEATS WITHIN ME AND LUNGS TO DRAW BREATH WITH...
... GERUASE QUINN WILL NEVER ADMIT DEFEAT!
I'LL FIND A WAY TO GET OFF THIS MISERABLE PILE OF SAND AN' SHRUBBERY!
SOMEDAY, I'LL GET A NEW SHIP BENEATH ME FEET, AND A CREW OF MY OWN AT MY BACK, LOYAL MEN I CAN TRUST.
AND WE'LL SWEEP ACROSS THE SEAS AND MAKE EVERY ROGUE OF YOU WHO BETRAYED ME RUE THE DAY I WAS MAROONED...
BAH!!!

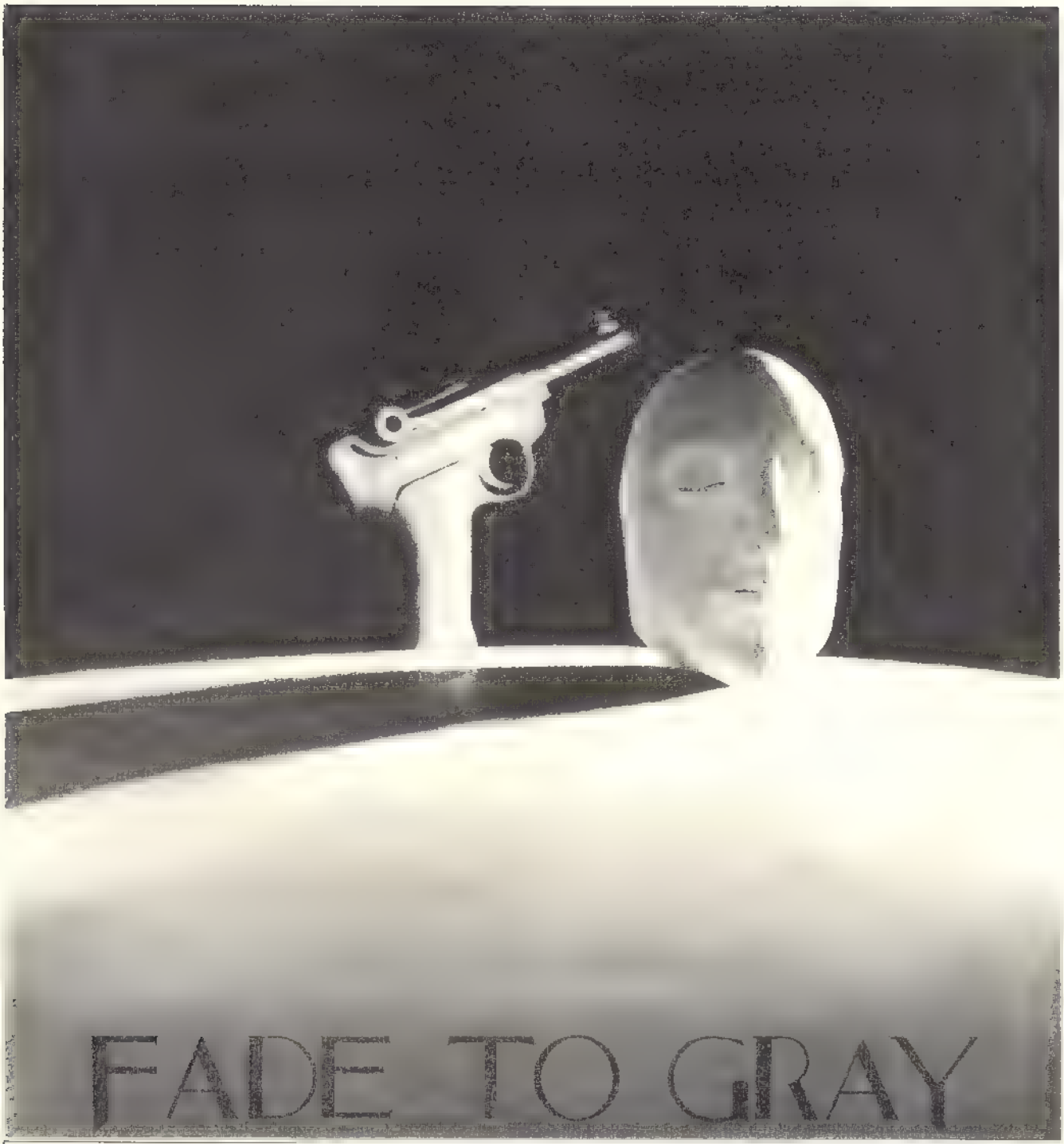
THE DANCING QUEEN - HA! THAT TUB... THAT BUCKET!
I MUST A' BEEN OUT A ME HEAD THE DAY I SIGNED ON ABOARD HER...
THERE'S BETTER SHIPS IN THESE SEAS FOR A MAN A' ME STAMP...
AND BETTER THINGS FOR ME TO BE DOING WITH ME TIME THAN STANDING HERE CURS'N HER.
AN' THE DOGS WHO MAN HER...
IF I'M TO HAVE ANY KIND OF A LIFE HERE...
.. I'D BEST BE THINKIN' ABOUT FOOD...
..SHELTER.
SNIFF!!
A FIRE

AT LEAST THE CLIMATE'S GOOD..
.. AND THERE SEEMS TO BE PLENTY TO EAT AT HAND...
AH! I LIKE THAT!
THUMP!
♪♫♪
QUINN, OLD BOY, YOUR LUCK IS HOLDIN' TRUE!
WHAT'S A LITTLE SETBACK LIKE YOU'VE HAD TODAY, WHEN A MAN LEADS A CHARMED LIFE?

WHOOOSH
WHOOOSH
WHOOOSH!
THRUD!
WHAT THE BLOODY HELL DID I...
?
LOOT!
WHAT WAS I SAYIN' ABOUT ME OLD FRIEND LADY LUCK? SHE STILL LOVES ME...
I NO SOONER EMBARK UPON A COURSE OF PIRACY THAN SHE CAST ME MY FIRST...
...TREASURE?
WHAT GIMCRACKS ARE THESE? I'VE NEVER SEEN THEIR LIKE BEFORE! WHAT VALUE HAVE THEY?
UUURGHH!
ARRH!
HOLY MOTHER OF GOD!!

K-KEEP BACK FROM ME!
AWAY, YOU POLTROON!
SMACK!
ARRA-HAVE TO HIT ME SO HARD?
WHAT?!
LEAVE THOSE THINGS IN THE BOX ALONE!
THEY ARE OURS, AND YOU CANNOT HAVE THEM...
THE HEAT'S TURNED ME BRAIN... THAT'S IT... THE HEAT'S TURNED ME BRAIN...
WHY CAN I UNDERSTAND WHAT THESE MONSTERS ARE SAYING? IT'S THE HEAT
IT IS THE STAFF OF RASHOMON, WHICH YOU WIELD EVEN NOW...
ITS MAGIC IS THE POWER TO TRANSLATE TONGUES...
IT WAS ONE OF THE FEW BOONS RASHOMON LEFT US...

AYE, WE ARE NOT OF THIS PRIMITIVE WORLD OF YOURS... BUT WE CAME HERE EXPLORING, AS PART OF RASHOMON'S CREW... AND WHEN WE DISPLEASED HIM, HE LEFT US HERE... IN THIS LOST LONELY, CHEERLESS PLACE...
... WHEN HE MAROONED US HERE
MAROONED!?
WELL YOU'RE BEASTIES AFTER ME OWN DARK HEART, AN' THAT'S A FACT...
YE KNOW
THERE ARE ENOUGH OF US HERE... AND YOU LOOK STRONG ENOUGH .. WE COULD BUILD A SHIP AND BE AT SEAS IN DAYS... WILL YOU PUT YOURSELVES IN MY HANDS? IF I CAN'T LEAD YOU TO RASHOMON, WELL...
.. THERE ARE OTHERS LIKE HIM, AND THE PLUNDER ON THIS WORLD IS GOOD.
FOR REVENGE... FOR PLUNDER... YES!
THEN COME ALONG MY HEARTIES!
THERE'S A WORLD OUT THERE FOR THE TAKING, AND BETWEEN US, WE'LL MAKE THE SEAS RUN RED!



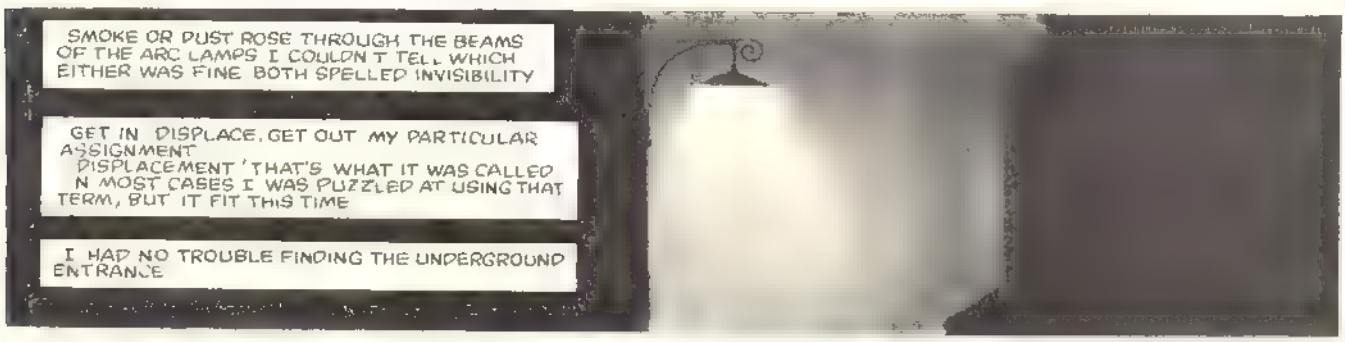
# FADE TO GRAY

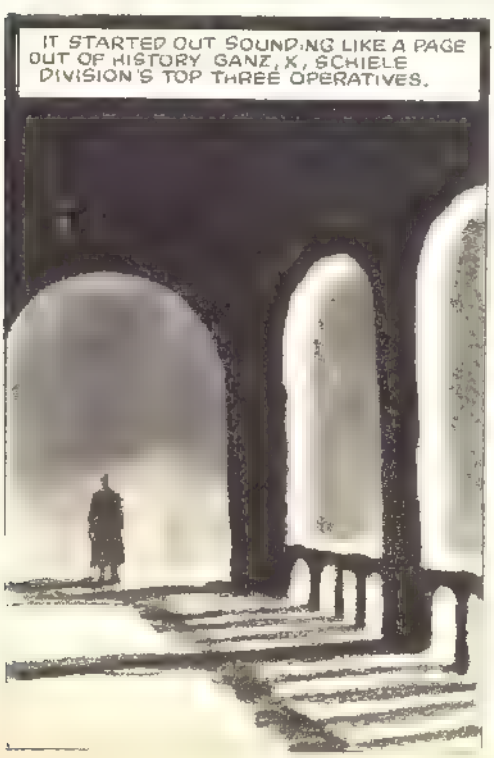
## THE MYTHOLOGY OF AN ABANDONED CITY

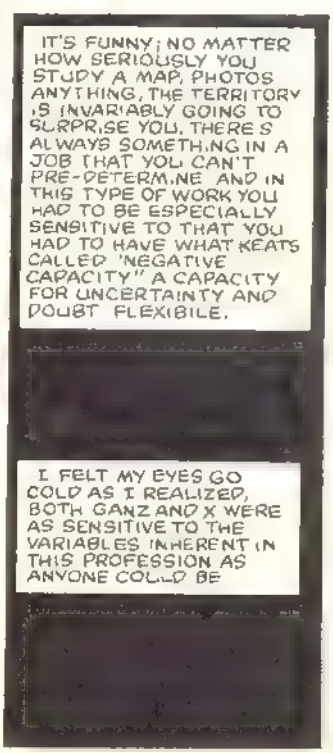
*NOTHING IS WHAT IT SEEMS.*
THIS IS NOT A CONCEPT, IT IS AN ENIGMA.

© 1983 Jon Jay Muth

FINALLY THE SIRENS FADED OUT I HAD LOST THEM


SMOKE OR DUST ROSE THROUGH THE BEAMS OF THE ARC LAMPS I COULDN'T TELL WHICH EITHER WAS FINE BOTH SPELLED INVISIBILITY
GET IN DISPLACE. GET OUT MY PARTICULAR ASSIGNMENT
DISPLACEMENT 'THAT'S WHAT IT WAS CALLED N MOST CASES I WAS PUZZLED AT USING THAT TERM, BUT IT FIT THIS TIME
I HAD NO TROUBLE FINDING THE UNDERGROUND ENTRANCE


IT STARTED OUT SOUNDING LIKE A PAGE OUT OF HISTORY GANZ, X, SCHIELE DIVISION'S TOP THREE OPERATIVES.


IT'S FUNNY; NO MATTER HOW SERIOUSLY YOU STUDY A MAP, PHOTOS ANYTHING, THE TERRITORY IS INVARIABLY GOING TO SURPRISE YOU. THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING IN A JOB THAT YOU CAN'T PRE-DETERMINE AND IN THIS TYPE OF WORK YOU HAD TO BE ESPECIALLY SENSITIVE TO THAT YOU HAD TO HAVE WHAT KEATS CALLED 'NEGATIVE CAPACITY" A CAPACITY FOR UNCERTAINTY AND DOUBT FLEXIBILE.
I FELT MY EYES GO COLD AS I REALIZED, BOTH GANZ AND X WERE AS SENSITIVE TO THE VARIABLES INHERENT IN THIS PROFESSION AS ANYONE COULD BE

GANZ WAS ONE OF PERHAPS HALF A DOZEN WHO COULD LAY OSTENSIBLE CLAIM TO BEING SOMETHING OF A LEGEND AT TWENTY FOUR HE WAS RANKED WITH THE TOP INTERNATIONAL LEVEL FIELD MEN GANZ WAS A WONDERKID YOU DON'T RUN INTO MANY OF THOSE IN THE BUSINESS NOT THE REAL THING ANYWAY MOSTLY THAT'S A MISNOMER. FOR SOME HOTSHOT, WHO THROUGH NO FAULT OF HIS OWN ENDS UP THE LAST ONE ALIVE AT THE CLOSE OF THE OPERATION

BUT I KNEW ABOUT GANZ HE WAS SOLID NEVER LET THE WORK RATE INCREASES INTERFERE NEVER LET HIMSELF BECOME VULNERABLE A GOOD KID... AND NEVER SAW TWENTY SIX

X WAS A DIFFERENT STORY HE WAS A RODENT

SOME SAID HE HAD SIMPLY BEEN ON TOO MANY SIDES TOO OFTEN CLIMBED OUT OF TOO MANY BURNING CARS THAT NO ONE ELSE SEEMED TO BE ABLE TO GET CLEAR OF OTHERS SAID HE HAD NO SOUL I THOUGHT THAT WAS PRETTY FUNNY. SOUL WAS NOT CRITERIA FOR THIS JOB HE HAD THE SAME LEVEL CLEARANCE THAT GANZ AND I DID AND WHEN THE WORD CAME DOWN FROM DIVISION THAT X WAS TO BE REMOVED UPON MY ARRIVAL, I FELT REGRET SINCERE. BUT HARDLY MORE THAN A DOLLOP'S WORTH

HE WOULD HAVE DONE THE SAME THING TO ME ANY ADVANTAGE WAS WORTH WHATEVER THE COST GANZ' DEATH WAS A LITTLE MORE DISHEARTENING I DON'T KNOW WHY NEITHER OF THEM HAD BEEN FRIENDS NOT FRIENDS, NOR COHORTS, NOR ASSOCIATES BARELY ACQUAINTANCES WE SHARED AN OCCUPATION

NOW THEY WERE BOTH DEAD I GUESSED I WAS, TOO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS WHOLE AFFAIR SMELLED BAD.

SUDDENLY I COULD FEEL THE WRONGNESS OF IT. AS IF THE MISTS I WAS SLIPPING THROUGH WERE SOMEHOW CHARGED WITH FEAR AND SLIPPING THROUGH ME

I COULD FEEL THE COLD DEAD EYES OF X AND GANZ ON ME AND I THOUGHT TO MYSELF, "I'M COMING, BOYS I'M COMING."

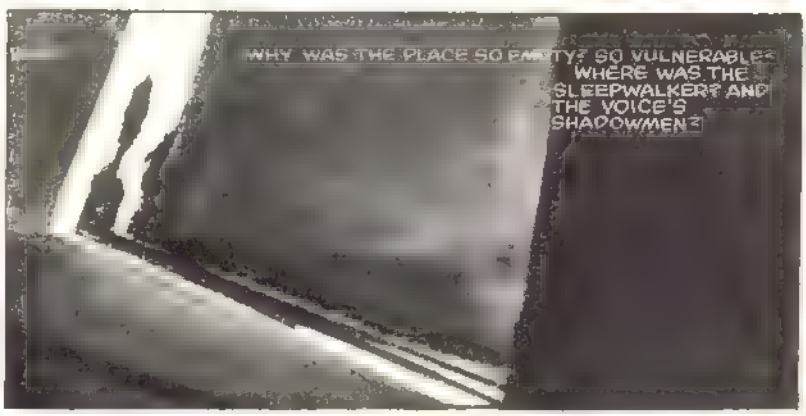
INTELLIGENCE HAD IT THAT THIS SIDE OF THE WALL DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT US WHAT I DIDN'T KNOW AS I WAS CLIMBING INTO THE BELLY OF THE TOWER WAS THAT INTELLIGENCE WAS WRONG DEAD WRONG

HE IS COMING?
I AM CERTAIN OF IT SIR

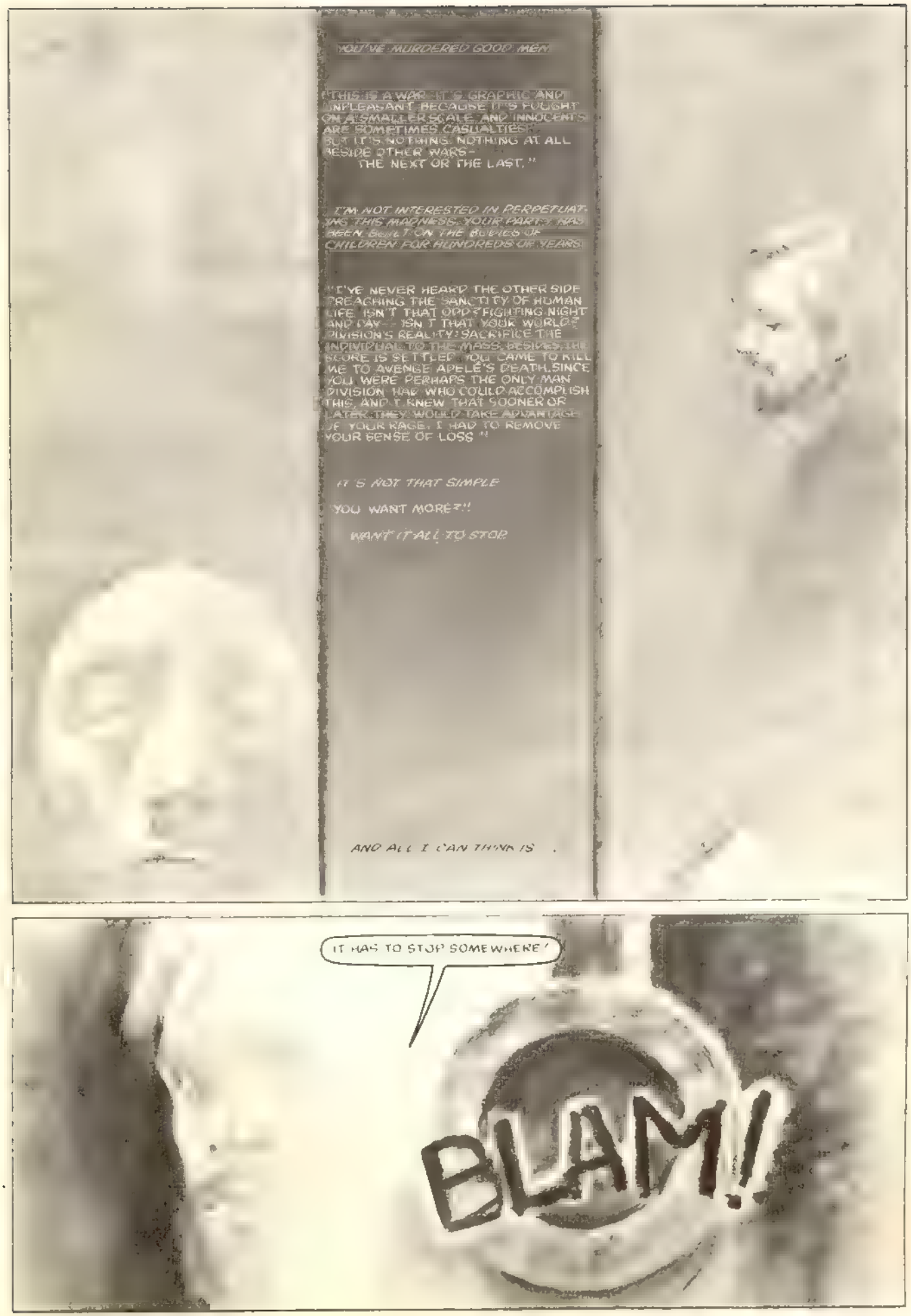
I'LL ATTEND TO IT

FIFTEEN YEARS EARLIER, IN A SMALL PARK, DURING A PERFORMANCE OF THE SOE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION. A BOMB, SET BY TERRORISTS FROM THIS SIDE OF THE WALL, WAS DETONATED, KILLING ELEVEN PEOPLE.
MY WIFE'S NAME HAD BEEN ADELE. SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN TWENTY FOUR THE FOLLOWING WEEK
I LOCKED EYES WITH HER ACROSS THE ROOM. MY WORLD STOPPED AS OUR EYES MET.
WHAT HAPPENED NEXT WAS A SECOND CHANCE. AND IT TOOK MY BEATING HEART OUT OF MY CHEST AND LAID IT, STILL BEATING, BEFORE ME.
HERE SHE WAS. ALMOST TWENTY FOUR, WITH THE SAME WHITE ROSE PETALS I HAD PLACED IN HER HAIR, THE NIGHT OF THE CONCERT. HERE WAS ADELE. SHE HELD ME, AND TEARS FILLED HER EYES AS SHE WHISPERED MY NAME. EVERYTHING I KNEW WAS SHATTERED

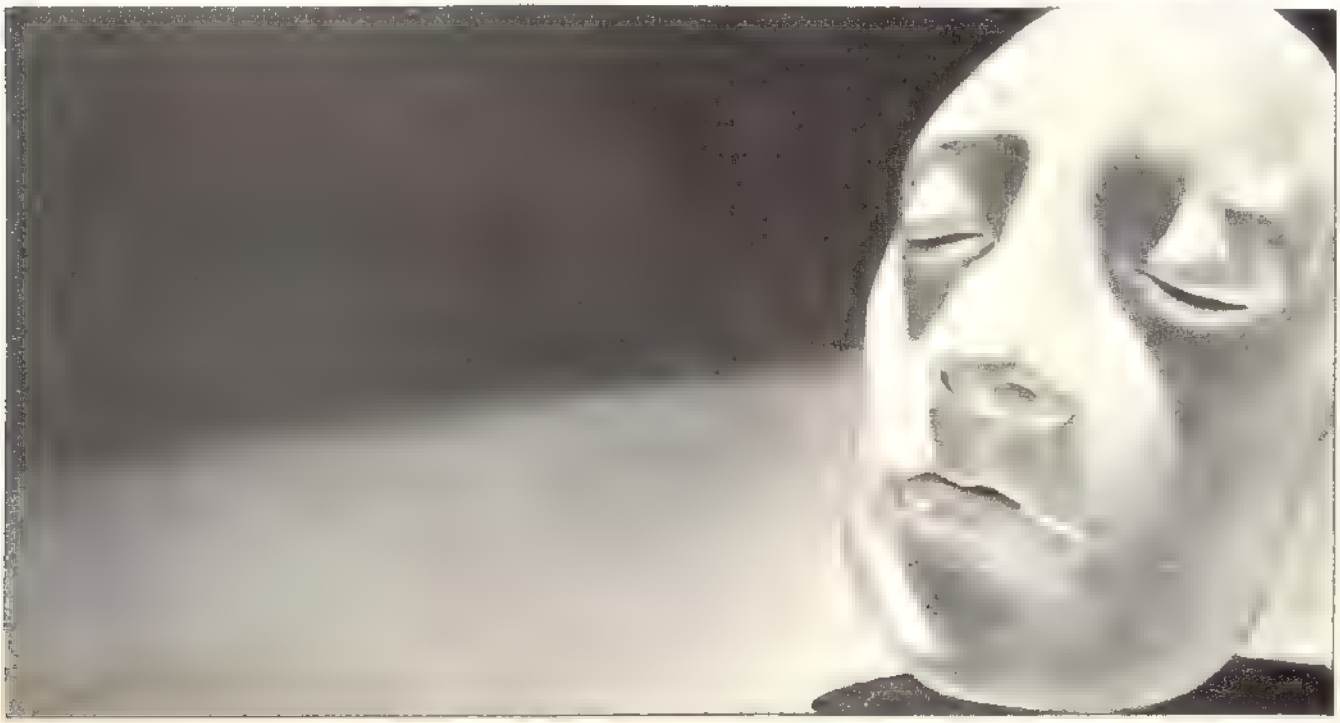
TRUST ME
A DREADFUL BLOCK WAS FORMING IN MY MIND. I CONCENTRATED. I COULDN'T HAVE A CRISIS NOW. HAD TO REMEMBER. THE ONLY WAY TO GET OUT, WITH ADELE WAS TO PUT SENTIMENT AND ASTONISHMENT AWAY.
THIS WAS A SCENE IN WHICH ADELE PLAYED NO PART.
HERE I WAS, MY PAST LITERALLY GIVEN BACK TO ME AND I HAD TO IGNORE IT, HAD TO TAKE IT IN STRIDE.


WHY WAS THE PLACE SO EMPTY? SO VULNERABLE? WHERE WAS THE SLEEPWALKER? AND THE VOICE'S SHADOWMEN?

ARE YOU IDEOLOGICALLY SOUND, MR SCHIELE?


YOU'VE MURDERED GOOD MEN
"THIS IS A WAR. IT'S GRAPHIC AND UNPLEASANT BECAUSE IT'S FOUGHT ON A SMALLER SCALE AND INNOCENTS ARE SOMETIMES CASUALTIES. BUT IT'S NOTHING. NOTHING AT ALL BESIDE OTHER WARS— THE NEXT OR THE LAST."
I'M NOT INTERESTED IN PERPETUATING THIS MADNESS. YOUR PART HAS BEEN BUILT ON THE BODIES OF CHILDREN FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS.
"I'VE NEVER HEARD THE OTHER SIDE PREACHING THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE. ISN'T THAT ODD? FIGHTING NIGHT AND DAY — ISN'T THAT YOUR WORLD? DIVISION'S REALITY? SACRIFICE THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE MASS. BESIDES, THE SCORE IS SETTLED. YOU CAME TO KILL ME TO AVENGE APELÉ'S DEATH, SINCE YOU WERE PERHAPS THE ONLY MAN DIVISION HAD WHO COULD ACCOMPLISH THIS, AND I KNEW THAT SOONER OR LATER THEY WOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR RAGE. I HAD TO REMOVE YOUR SENSE OF LOSS."
IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE
YOU WANT MORE?!!
I WANT IT ALL TO STOP.
AND ALL I CAN THINK IS . . .
IT HAS TO STOP SOMEWHERE!
BLAM!!

I TURNED AWAY
I DIDN'T WANT TO KNOW IF SHE WAS CRYING.
THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD SAY THAT WOULD CHANGE WHAT SHE HAD JUST SEEN
THIS WAS A WAR
A WAR WITHOUT MORAL LIMIT A WAR TOO MUCH LIKE THE LAST TOO MUCH LIKE THE ONE I HAD LOST HER IN BEFORE
I PRAYED I HADN'T JUST LOST HER AGAIN, IN A SUBTLER WAY



I TOOK ADELE'S HAND IN MINE AND WE RAN
HEADED FOR THE WALL EAST SECTOR CHECKED MY WATCH
IN TWENTY-THREE MINUTES, DIVISION WOULD BE WAITING ON THE OTHER SIDE
IN TWENTY-FOUR MINUTES, THEY WOULD ARRANGE ESCAPE
IN ONE HOUR THEY WOULD HAVE MY RESIGNATION AND LIFE WOULD BEGIN I SQUEEZED HER HAND TIGHTER

I DON'T KNOW WHICH I NOTICED FIRST...
...THE THUNDER ..
BLAM
OR THE LIGHTNING

AS I FELL, I REALIZED WHY WAS THE TOWER UNGUARDED? WHY WAS GANZ DEAD? WHY WAS I TOLD TO TAKE OUT MR X?

ADELE PICKED UP THE CAN

BLAM!

DIVISION KNEW DIVISION SET IT UP. THEY KNEW GANZ'S WEAPON WOULDN'T DO IT. THEY LIED TO HIM. THAT'S WHY THE POOR BASTARD GOT HIMSELF KILLED. HE HAD FIGURED IT OUT. HE HAD FOUND ADELE AND WAS ATTEMPTING TO TAKE HER BACK WITH HIM. SHE WAS HIS *PROOF!*

PROOF THAT THEY KNEW OUR EVERY MOVE

THE SLEEPWALKER IS - *WAS*-- DIVISION'S MAN. I WAS WITNESSING THE TWISTED IRONIC END TO A TWISTED IRONIC OPERATION TO PUT THE SLEEPWALKER IN POWER. THE OTHER SIDE WANTED THE VOICE GONE. SILENCED. SO THEY SET HIM UP. BOUGHT HIS NEXT IN COMMAND.

DIVISION DIDN'T WANT THE VOICE OUT OF THE WAY SO THEY COULD BEGIN TO INVADE THIS SIDE OF THE WALL. AB GANZ, X AND I WERE TOLD THEY WANTED IT ALL TO STAY THE SAME WITH NO MORE WARS.

THEY GO OUT OF BUSINESS.

AND THE VOICE. INTENDED TO KEEP COMMUNICATIONS ZERO. MAYBE HOPING THIS FIGHTING WOULD FINALLY COME TO AN END. WHO WOULD CONTINUE THE TRADITION? SOMEONE TO TAKE THIS WAR OUT OF THE CLOAK AND DAGGER MODE. THEY KNEW IT WAS NO GOOD JUST ELIMINATING THE VOICE. THEY HAD TO ELIMINATE THE VOICE *AND* ESCALATE THE FIGHTING.

SO THEY INTENDED TO OUTRAGE THE PEOPLE OF THIS SIDE BY KILLING OFF THEIR LEADER. AND EXCITE THE ANGER ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL BY LOSING ITS TOP-THREE-OPERATIVES. HOW FAR COULD THE MISSILE LAUNCHING BE?

NOW... THAT WASN'T GOING TO HAPPEN. NOW GOD KNOWS WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN

I HEARD HER WHISPER, IT'S ALL RIGHT, '
AS I FELT MYSELF HOISTED OVER
IT S ALL RIGHT I SMILED AT THAT.
IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW RIDICULOUS A LIE IS IF THE LIE IS YOUR ONLY HOPE OF ESCAPE.
IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW OBVIOUS THE TRUTH IS IF THE TRUTH IS THAT YOU'LL NEVER ESCAPE

AH... LEGION ONE. YOU'RE CLEARED ON FINAL APPROACH

HIS SLOT VECTOR'S OFF AND HE'S NOT SLOWING — HE DOSEN'T HAVE FULL GEAR DEPLOYMENT EITHER!!
ATTENTION L-1! OVER SHOOT! DO YOU COPY? OVER-SHOOT! JOSHUA, FOR GOD'S SAKE OVERSH

ERIC — WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SISTER MARIANNA!
LAST RITES ARE HELD UP IN THE CHAPEL. WHAT'S THIS FUNERAL POD DOING IN THE SANCTUARY?
Attention all medical personnel. Report to the flight deck immediately — Emergency! Attention —

"OH, DEVILISH TANTALIZATION OF THE GODS!"

JOSHUA —!
MARIANNA — OVER HERE, QUICKLY!

SISTER ELAINE — WHO IS IT?
ONE OF THE PILOTS. THE OTHER ONE WAS KILLED ON IMPACT — BUT WE CAN'T FIND BROTHER JOSHUA.

THANK GOD.
WHAT?

THE SACRED AND THE PROFANE continues next issue